



# MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE  
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **DHS AWARDED \$9.6 MILLION IN BONUS PAYMENT FOR FAMILIES FIRST SUCCESS**

STATE'S "WELFARE TO WORK" PROGRAM CONTINUES TO IMPROVE LIVES

NASHVILLE, Tenn.— The Tennessee Department of Human Services was awarded \$9.6 million in high performance bonuses from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services this week. The award is tied to Tennessee's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program, Families First.

Tennessee, along with 40 other states and the District of Columbia, received \$200 million in bonuses for success in employment and other program achievements during fiscal year 2001. Tennessee's payment is the seventh highest award in the country.

"We are proud of our program and proud of our participants," said DHS Commissioner Gina Lodge. "These performance bonuses prove that Families First is working to help those in need help themselves and succeed in life."

A breakdown of the bonus payments includes \$5.7 million for job entry. Tennessee ranked sixth in the nation on individuals moving into the work force. \$2.2 million was awarded for the Food Stamp Program participation among low-income working families with children. \$1.4 million was awarded for increasing the Food Stamp Program participation rate among low-income working families with children from the prior year. And \$270,000 was awarded for the department's performance in paying child care subsidies.

Commissioner Lodge says no decisions have yet been made for using the money. However, she emphasized that because these are one-time funds, they would not be used for recurring expenses.

For more information on the Families First Program, visit the DHS website at:  
<http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv/famfir.htm>

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